

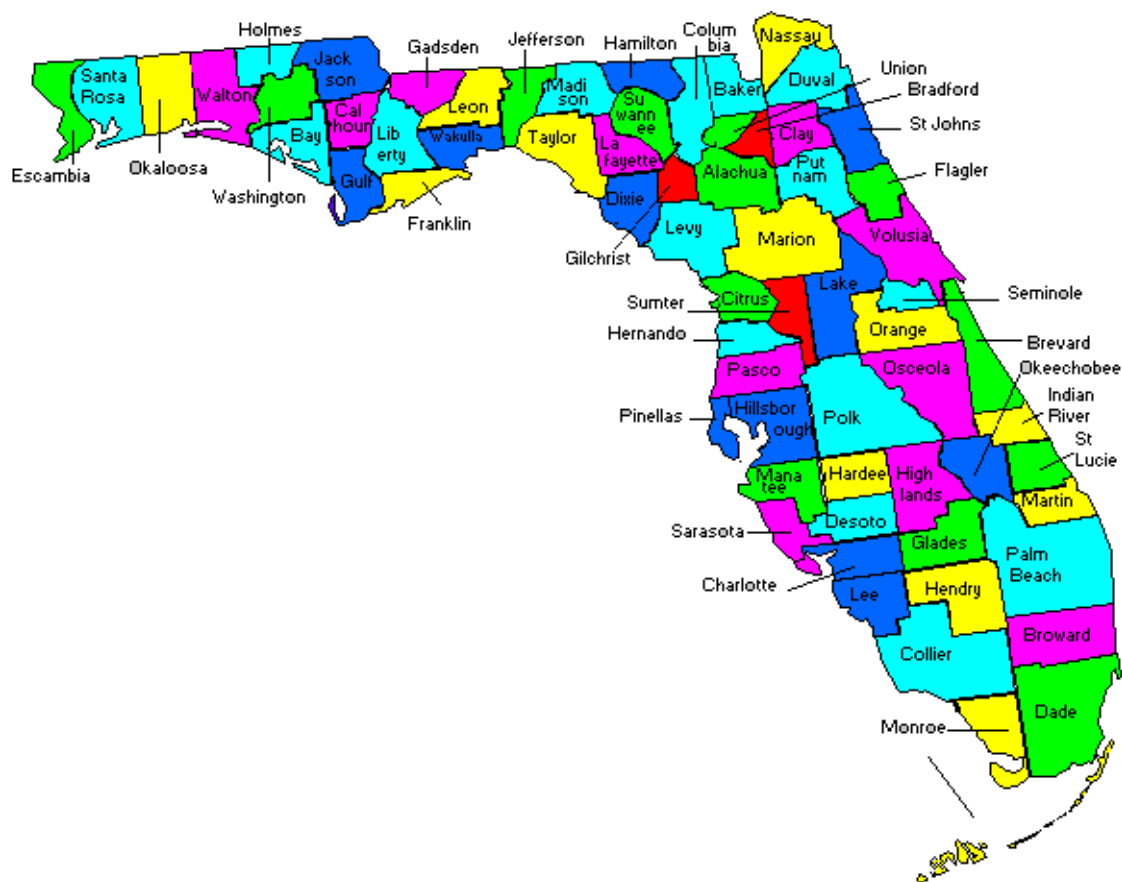
Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Miami, Florida

Profile of Drug Indicators

August 2000



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Miami

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population: 372,949 (1998 estimate)
- Race/Ethnicity: 66% Hispanic; 21% African American; 12% white; 1% other
- County: Dade
- Population (Miami-Dade County): 2,175,634

Politics²

- Mayor: Joe Carollo
- City Manager: Donald H. Warshaw
- Police Chief: William E. O'Brien

Programs/Initiatives

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)³
The South Florida HIDTA was designated in 1990 and is composed of Monroe, Dade, and Broward Counties. This HIDTA site covers over 500 miles of coastline and is the crossroads for nearly all air and sea traffic from South America and the Caribbean entering the U.S. There are three international seaports, 4 international airports, and ten private airports found within this region. Since its designation, the Miami HIDTA has successfully dismantled drug trafficking organizations and gangs, arrested drug-involved career criminals and violent offenders, and made major inroads in dismantling the Medellin and Cali Cartels. Miami's close proximity to drug producing countries, along with its seaports, airports, and international banking enterprises, make it a major target of criminal enterprise.
- Executive Office of Weed and Seed⁴
The Miami/Miami-Dade Weed and Seed was officially recognized as a Weed and Seed site in October 1996. The target area of this site is the neighborhood of Liberty City/Model City where 48% of the residents are living in poverty. The primary goals of this Weed and Seed site are to eliminate violent crime, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime and to provide a safe environment for the citizens that is free of crime and drug use.

Crime & Drug-Related Crime

- In 1999, there were approximately 40,000 index crime offenses known to the police in Miami. During 1998, there were approximately 45,000.⁵
- The number of murders known to the police in the Miami area during 1999 was 63. During 1998, there were 86 murders known to the police.⁶

Index Crime Offenses Known to Police, Miami, 1998-1999

Offense	1998	1999
Murder	86	63
Forcible Rape	140	113
Robbery	3,797	3,076
Aggravated Assault	5,482	4,609
Burglary	7,831	7,329
Larceny-theft	20,905	19,135
Motor Vehicle Theft	6,681	5,723
Arson	244	216
Index Crime Total	45,166	40,268

- In Miami during 1999, 66.0% of male arrestees tested positive for drugs at the time of their arrests. ⁷

Percent Positive for Drugs, Males, By Offense Category, Miami, 1999

Offense Category	Cocaine	Marijuana	PCP	Any Drug
Violent	40.0	33.5	0.4	57.0
Property	48.9	33.0	0.0	66.3
Drug	73.3	45.3	0.0	89.1
Sales	70.6	47.1	0.0	82.4
Possession	73.9	45.2	0.0	90.4
Prostitution	25.0	37.5	0.0	50.0
Other	42.2	37.9	0.3	59.3

Drugs⁸

- Cocaine and Crack
Although indicators of local (Miami-Dade County) cocaine abuse have generally stabilized since 1993, they still outrank other drug problems in this area. Among youthful abusers, the Florida International University/Miami Coalition 1997 school survey suggests that crack has replaced cocaine HCl. The popularity of combining marijuana and crack in a “geek joint” continues to be reported by hotline callers and school counselors.
- Heroin
There is concern that a parallel may exist between Miami's cocaine/crack epidemic of the 1980's and its heroin problems of the 1990's. Cocaine abuse is a significant risk factor for initiating heroin use in the South Florida region. Heroin-related deaths, ED mentions, and requests for treatment are escalating in Miami. Miami-Dade County is a leading U.S. cocaine importation center and has become a gateway for high purity, Colombian heroin in the 1990's.
- Marijuana
In Miami, domestic production of marijuana has become a vast drug industry that involves many small crime groups. Indoor hydroponic marijuana farms were seized in private homes on a weekly basis in 1997. Supplies of Caribbean- and Latin-American-

produced marijuana continue to be reported less than the higher potency domestic varieties.

➤ **Other Drugs**

- Methamphetamine availability continues to be mentioned by drug users associated with the South (Miami) Beach club lifestyle. This stimulant is increasingly being deceptively sold as MDMA.
- MDMA/Ecstasy is often used by adolescents, young adults and particularly bar and dance club customers.
- The use of gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) in combination with alcohol has replaced flunitrazepam (Rohypnol) as the fastest growing new problem in the depressant category in Miami. GHB became a Schedule II controlled substance in Florida in 1997. GHB can be manufactured in clandestine labs as well as in simple home labs using chemicals that are not difficult to obtain.
- The availability and use of Rohypnol dramatically declined in 1997 following various local, Florida, and Federal actions directed at controlling its wide-scale diversion from foreign pharmaceutical sources. Both houses of the Florida Legislature voted unanimously in March 1997 to make Rohypnol a Schedule I controlled substance.
- Ketamine ("Special K"), a diverted veterinary anesthetic, has been reported in association with dance clubs in South Beach and is often used in combination with other drugs.
- Availability and use of LSD continue to be widely reported in the Miami area.

Juveniles⁹

- A 1999 survey of Miami high school students indicated that 35.5% of them had tried marijuana at least once in their lifetimes. 23.6% of males surveyed reported that they were current marijuana users.

Percent of Miami High School Students Using Selected Drugs, 1999

Drug Type and Use	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime Marijuana Use	29.8	41.1	35.5
Current Marijuana Use	14.7	23.6	19.3
Lifetime Cocaine Use	8.2	11.1	9.8
Current Cocaine Use	2.8	7.2	5.2
Lifetime Inhalant Use	9.6	11.9	10.9
Current Inhalant Use	3.0	4.8	4.0
Lifetime Heroin Use	2.3	4.7	3.7
Lifetime Methamphetamine Use	4.4	6.6	5.6
Lifetime Illegal Steroid Use	2.2	5.8	4.2
Lifetime Injecting Illegal Drug Use	1.2	3.9	2.7
Tried Marijuana Before Age 13	5.4	12.8	9.2

Trafficking and Seizures

- From November 1999 to June 2000, U.S. Customs' Miami office seized at least 6,000 pounds of cocaine from ships out of Haiti.¹⁰

- During 1999 there were approximately 1,750 MDMA/Ecstasy pills seized in Miami Beach. During this same time, there were 27 arrests made related to MDMA.¹¹
- In December of 1999, an individual was arrested on Miami Beach wearing a specially designed vest with 10,000 Ecstasy tablets concealed in the lining. This person had just entered the U.S. from the Netherlands.¹²
- During FY 1997, the South Florida HIDTA dismantled 77 drug trafficking and money-laundering organizations. During this same time period in FY 98, South Florida HIDTA dismantled 184 drug trafficking and related money-laundering organizations.¹³
- In 1998, 223 kilograms of heroin were seized by the South Florida HIDTA. This is a significant increase over the amount seized in 1997 (36.7 kilograms).¹⁴

Drugs Seized (in kilograms), South Florida HIDTA, 1996-98

Drug	1996	1997	1998
Cocaine	16,199	29,985	31,526
Marijuana	5,568	4,242	16,039
Marij. Plants	7,334	20,405	20,270
Crack Cocaine	18.1	22.9	6.8
Heroin	38.3	36.7	223

Courts¹⁵

- As of March 31, 2000, there was one drug court in Miami that had been in existence for over two years. At this time, there was also one drug court in Miami that had recently been implemented. There was also one juvenile drug court being planned in Miami at this time.

Consequences of Use

- In 1998 there were 273 cocaine-related deaths reported by Medical Examiners (ME) in the Miami District.¹⁶ During this same time there were 61 heroin-related deaths in the Miami District.¹⁷
- From January to June 1999, there were 3,320 Emergency Department (ED) drug episodes reported in Miami.¹⁸
- At this same time, there were 5,606 drug mentions in Miami EDs.¹⁹
- During 1998 there were 3,553 cocaine mentions in Miami EDs.²⁰

Estimated Number of ED Mentions by Drug, Miami, 1997-98

Cocaine		Heroin/ Morphine		Marijuana/ Hashish		Methamphet- Amine/Speed	
1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998
3,254	3,553	599	772	1,030	1,118	10	16

Treatment²¹

- From July to December 1997, 83% of the people who entered treatment in Miami with marijuana as the primary substance of abuse were males.

Treatment Admissions, by Primary Substance of Use, Miami, July-December 1997

Demographic Characteristics	Cocaine %	Heroin %	Marijuana %	Stimulant/ Methamphet %
Gender				
Male	73	74	83	83
Female	27	26	17	17
Race/Ethnicity				
White	28	59	25	65
African American	47	21	48	35
Hispanic	34	31	33	12
Haitian	1	0	1	0

Sources

¹ City of Miami Web site: <http://ci.miami.fl.us/>

² Ibid.

³ Miami HIDTA site: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/enforce/hidta/sfla-main.html>

⁴ Weed and Seed: <http://www.weedseed.org/>

⁵ FBI, *Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Reports 1999*, May 2000: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/prelim99.pdf>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ National Institute of Justice, *1999 Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, July 2000: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/new.htm#181426>

⁸ Community Epidemiology Work Group, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse*, January 1999, <http://www.cdmgroup.com/cewg>

⁹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States, 1999*, June 2000

¹⁰ U.S. Customs Web site: <http://www.customs.treas.gov>

¹¹ City of Miami Beach Police Department

¹² Ibid.

¹³ South Florida High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, *Annual Report Fiscal Year 1998*, November 1998

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project, *Summary of Drug Court Activity by State and County*, March 31, 2000

¹⁶ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *1998 Report of Cocaine Identified in Deceased Persons by Florida Medical Examiners*, http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Publications/cocaine_heroion_1998/cocaine.asp

¹⁷ Florida Department of Law Enforcement, *Heroin Toxicity Deaths in Florida in 1998*, http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/Publications/cocaine_heroion_1998/heroin.asp

¹⁸ Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Mid-Year 1999 Preliminary Emergency Department Data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network*, March 2000, http://www.samhsa.gov/oas/DAWN/DawnMidYr/99mid_year.pdf

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Year End 1998 Emergency Department Data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network*, December 1999, <http://www.samhsa.gov/OAS/DAWN/98yr-end-rev04.pdf>

²¹ Community Epidemiology Work Group, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse*, January 1999, <http://www.cdmgroup.com/cewg>

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